

Issue 9
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Items of Interest:

The President's Commission on Care for America's Returning Wounded Warriors has launched a public website for servicemen and women to share their stories about the continuity of care they received from the time they were hurt on the battlefield through the transition to civilian life or back to active duty service. The "share your story" section is on the official Commission website - <http://www.pccww.gov> -- which will provide the public with information on Commission activities. Commission co-chairs, former Senator Bob Dole and former Health and Human Services Secretary Donna E. Shalala, urged our nation's wounded warriors to log on and share their experiences with the Commission.

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DoD Names Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs

U.S. Department of Defense Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs)

FALLS CHURCH, Va. – The Department of Defense announced today that Dr. S. Ward Casscells has assumed the duties as assistant secretary of defense for Health Affairs April 17.

In this position, Casscells will be responsible for overall leadership of the Military Health System, serve as the principal advisor to the secretary of defense for all DoD health policies and programs and oversee all DoD health resources.

Prior to his appointment, Casscells was a distinguished professor and vice president of biotechnology at the University of Texas Health Science Center in Houston and director of clinical research at the Texas Heart Institute.



WASHINGTON - Deputy Secretary of Defense Gordon England (right) administers the oath of office to newly appointed Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs Dr. Ward Casscells (left) during a Pentagon ceremony on April 16. Holding the Bible is Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness David S. C. Chu (center). *Department of Defense photo by Helene C. Stikkel*

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TITIANA, Solomon Islands - Lt. Cmdr. Karlwin Matthews provides medical care to a child in Titiana, Solomons Islands April 16. Matthews is an individual augmentee from Naval Medical Center San Diego, embarked on Military Sealift Command (MSC) roll-on/roll-off ship USNS Stockham (T-AK 3017). *U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Andrew Meyers*

CASEVAC Training Hones Corpsmen's Skills

By Cpl. Randall A. Clinton, Marine Corps Air Station New River, N.C.

MARINE CORPS AIR STATION NEW RIVER, N.C. - "To put as many men, on as many guns, as medically possible," recites Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class Emanuel Carr, Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 464 squadron corpsman.

Carr and other corpsmen learn the mission and skills needed to accomplish it as part of a casualty evacuation class taught on Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C. The class brings together corpsmen from all over the east coast who will deploy as the next CASEVAC unit so they can refine their medical skills together, said Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Raymond Munn, CASEVAC lead instructor.

The doldrums of the Naval Clinic and run-of-the-mill doctor visits provide a dramatic contrast to the "anything goes" atmosphere of the battlefield, Carr said.

"Sick call is routine, out here is all new," said the 2-year corpsman.

Both new and old corpsmen gain from the class. The teachings of the class presented a new way to treat injuries for Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Angel Hernandez, Marine Helicopter Training Squadron 302 squadron corpsmen, who has been helping Marines for 16 years.

Hernandez has served in a number of other corpsman roles, both garrison and deployed, but has never flown CASEVAC missions. While deployed with the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit, Hernandez worked as part of a 22-person platoon prepared to deal with mass casualties and refugee camps, which provided him a wealth of medical knowledge. After all the years of practicing medicine, Hernandez is still learning new techniques such as how to help patients in the fast-paced world of CASEVAC. The lightning-quick re-



MARINE CORPS AIR STATION NEW RIVER, N.C. - After identifying the wounded combatants, a casualty evacuation corpsmen calls for help to carry a simulated wounded Marine to a MV-22 'Osprey.' Corpsmen are taught to quickly assess each victim and move them to the aircraft as fast as possible. Transporting an injured patient to a treatment facility within the first hour of trauma can increase the chance of survival up to 90 percent. *U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. John A. Krake*

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Ceremony Establishes Naval Chaplains School

By Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class (SW/AW)
John Osborne, Naval Personnel Development Command
Public Affairs

NEWPORT, R.I. - A combined ceremony for the establishment of the Naval Chaplains School and the graduation of Chaplain Basic Course was held April 12 at Naval Station Newport.

The establishment ceremony marks the transition of the Naval Chaplains School from a department within Officer Training Command, Newport to a shore activity under the auspices of Naval Education and Training Command, Naval Personnel Development Command, and the Center for Service Support.

The Naval Chaplains School was established in Newport in 1951, after the outbreak of Korean hostilities and the increased requirement for chaplains dictated the need once again for an indoctrination course for newly procured chaplains. The school will be relocating to Fort Jackson, S.C., in 2010.

"The establishment of the Naval Chaplains School Command is reflective of the Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard's commitment to provide for the spiritual needs of its members," said Naval Chaplains School's Commanding Officer Capt. Tierian Cash.

He added that he has been pleased with the cooperation he has received from the Army and Air Force commanders and staff who are playing integral roles in the design of the new complex at Fort Jackson.

"You, the Sailors, Marines, and civilian staff have

been unbelievable. Your commitment to our mission and willingness to go above and beyond the call of duty has been an inspiration to me and the reason we are where we are today," said Cash.

The rich history of the Chaplains Corps and the dynamics of the impending move were not lost on Rear Adm. Jacob Shuford, president of the Naval War College, as he addressed the audience.

"A walk around this school translates a direct message to the soul about the tasks that lay ahead. It conveys as well the notion that the spiritual element is the foundation of our strength as a naval service," he said. "Your work, your service, your ministry—public and private—are daily evidence of the great truths of your creed and the great principles of your country."

Shuford expressed his pride in those who were graduating, reminding them of their great responsibilities and that they will soon be at the forefront of some challenging times.

"You've got some big challenges before you," he said. "Looking around me today at the living example and historical heritage of the Chaplains Corps, knowing who has been behind and beside you to get you here, and looking at you, I have absolute confidence we have chosen the best of you for that job and you will be up to the task."

The Navy currently has 856 active duty and 232 Reserve chaplains, 782 active duty and 202 Reserve religious program specialists who are serving in Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, and Merchant Marine units.

USS Boxer Medical Shines Bright With Gold Star

By Mass Communications Specialist
3rd Class (SW) James Seward, USS
Boxer Public Affairs

USS BOXER, At Sea - In April, USS Boxer's (LHD 4) Medical Department received their second accolade, the "Gold Star" Health Promotion award for outstanding efforts promoting healthy lifestyles to crewmembers.

The "Gold Star" is awarded by Naval Environmental Health Center's (NECH) and it follows on the heels of the ships of Boxer Expeditionary Strike Group (ESG) earning the Force Commander's Annual Health Promotion Unit Award known as the "Green H."

"Winning two consecutive awards lets the fleet know that Boxer's medical department is fully capable of providing quality care while deployed," said Senior Chief Hospital Corpsman (SW/AW) Stephen Richardson, Boxer's Medical Department leading chief petty officer. "As one of only two sea-going commands to receive the Gold Star, Boxer's medical has shown that we lead the way in shipboard medicine."

Boxer's medical department promotes healthy lifestyles by educating, informing and providing tools to help its Sailors and Marines lead healthy lives.

"This award shows the rest of the Navy that Boxer is taking care of its Sailors and Marines," said Richardson. "All the hard work that our team puts out every day is being recognized by this award."

According to Sally Vickers,

NECH health award coordinator, Boxer's Medical Department received the Gold Star due to superb health care management and the medical staff's direct involvement with the crew.

Throughout the past year, Boxer promoted the importance of crewmembers' health through classes such as women and men's health, tobacco cessation and physical fitness and readiness.

"The ship as a whole has been very responsive and receptive to the resources we provide," said Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class (SW) Renata Cooper. "Health is a major concern. We make sure we meet the crew's needs by providing them with all the right tools and information."

According to Fleet Surgical Team Five's Lt. Phillip Bamford, deployed aboard Boxer, the ship places an emphasis on its tobacco cessation course. When Sailors sign up for the course they are given medication to suppress nicotine withdrawal symptoms and receive training on how to stop their addiction by pinpointing the times and reasons they use tobacco most often.

"Programs that promote wellness through prevention are observed closely," said Bamford. "Making sure that we promote a tobacco-free environment helps keep the ship's physical readiness standards high."

Boxer offered two one-month smoking cessation classes with up to 20 Sailors per class. Nearly



PERSIAN GULF – Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Wyndi Holloway looks for a patient's medical record during sick call aboard amphibious assault ship USS Boxer (LHD 4) April 9. Boxer's medical department earned the Navy Environmental Health Center's Health Promotion award known as the "Gold Star." The award signifies the ship's corpsmen are among the best in taking care of its Sailors and Marines. *U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class*

every Sailor graduated the course, and four Sailors from each class reported that they are still smoke-free after a six-month follow up.

The ship also took into consideration Sailors who didn't pass the Navy's Physical Fitness Assessment, taking proactive steps toward helping them correct fitness problems by implementing programs such as mandatory physical training and weight and diet management.

Boxer plans on maintaining its standards by continuing to educate the crew about living a healthy lifestyle.

Health Affairs continued...

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Casscells received three Commandant's Medals from the U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command. For his work on telemedicine and disaster medicine, Casscells received the General Maxwell Thurman Award. As an advisor to the Army surgeon general for Hurricanes Rita and Katrina, Casscells received the Army Achievement Medal.

Casscells returned last December from a three-month tour of duty in Iraq, where he helped create a protocol for health policy and medical administration in

the region. He deployed to the Middle East and Asia to study avian influenza and assess the possibility of a pandemic.

He worked as the Army Medical Command's senior medical advisor for avian flu and pandemic flu. He also directed the Army's Disaster Relief and Emergency Medical Services Program and the Army's Texas Training and Technology against Trauma and Terrorism Program.

Casscells' full biography can be viewed on the Health Affairs Web site at <http://www.ha.osd.mil/ha/casscells-bio.cfm>.

USS Nassau Medical Team Trains with Allies

By Mass Communication Specialist
3rd Class Amanda Clayton, USS Nassau Public Affairs

ROTA, Spain - Military medical professionals from Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia visited USS Nassau (LHA 4) April 11 for a series of professional exchanges and demonstrations as part of the ongoing Exercise Phoenix Express.

Phoenix Express is one of a series of North African exercises held annually in the Naval Forces Europe-Sixth Fleet (CNE-C6F) area of operations and directly supports its strategic priority of improving maritime security.

"Until this exercise, I didn't know about some of the capabilities of the Algerian Navy," said Capt. David Lasseter, Nassau Senior Medical Officer. "We've learned

quite a bit in the first couple of hours of this exercise about the ability of the other countries involved in Phoenix Express."

Nassau medical staff and Fleet Surgical Team (FST) 2 exchanged medical knowledge, capabilities, and procedures with the teams from Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia. During the training evolution the teams reviewed MEDEVAC procedures, airway management and evaluation of trauma victims.

"We had people go above and beyond with this training," said Hospital Corpsman 1st Class (SW) Edward Daniel, FST-2 leading petty officer. "Their level of knowledge was above expectations."

The joint training aboard Nassau also included lab training, demonstrated blood transfusions, general

lab chemistry and the proper use of medical equipment.

"It was easy to work side by side with the diverse countries," said Daniel. "I learned that we're not that different, we do the same things just in a different way. Even though we couldn't speak the same language, we could understand them because medicine is universal."

Phoenix Express, a two-week exercise designed to strengthen regional maritime partnerships, is focused on the development of increased maritime domain awareness, better information sharing practices and the ability to operate jointly. The exercise included participants from France, Greece, Italy, Malta, Portugal, Spain, and Turkey.

CASEVAC continued...

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flexes needed in the deafening helicopters has led Hernandez to call the class "the toughest training in sixteen years of the Navy."

"You have all kinds of time to troubleshoot (in the clinic)," he said.

Complicating CASEVAC corpsmen's job, they are without the larger equipment and quiet patient rooms to evaluate each injury.

"How can you listen to lungs with the rotors spinning?" Hernandez asked rhetorically.

For these corpsmen, the course allows them to learn not only the textbook answer for these questions, but also practice with simulated casualties on helicopter flights, said Munn.

The corpsmen are tasked with "getting from the point of injury to a treatment facility," he said.

Referred to as the "golden hour," corpsmen learn that

the first hour of medical assistance can make the difference of life or death.

"If you can give treatment (in the first hour), it increases the chance of survival ninety percent," said Hernandez. "Stop the bleeding, start breathing and get on the helicopter."

While Munn's students have become comfortable with the knowledge and application of CASEVAC medicine, he knows that there is only so much you can teach.

Munn remembered back to his first CASEVAC flight, his mind shuffling from concerns about his own safety to that of the patient. The ability to overcome nervousness and focus on giving the injured Marine the proper care, like Munn learned on his first flight, will be key to the development for the corpsmen, he said.

"We are going into an area that is not entirely safe," Munn acknowledged. "It is something they need to experience for themselves."



PERSIAN GULF - Doctors and hospital corpsmen attached to Fleet Surgical Team (FST) 6 simulate surgery on a member of dock landing ship USS Oak Hill (LSD 51) Visit, Board, Search and Seizure (VBSS) Team during a mass casualty drill April 14 to test the response of the Expeditionary Resuscitative Surgical System (ERSS) concept. U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Jeremy L. Grisham

Naval Health Clinic New England Health Promotion Department wins Gold WELCOA Award



RHODE ISLAND STATE HOUSE, Newport, R.I. - Naval Health Clinic New England (NHCNE), Newport, R.I. earned a Gold Award as a Well Workplace Designation by The Wellness Councils of America (WELCOA), giving Rhode Island the distinction of becoming the first "Well State" in the nation. On April 10, at the Rhode Island State House, the Health Promotion Department of NHCNE, Newport, and Capt. Patricia Goodin (fifth from left), Commanding Officer, along with Capt. Murray Norcross, Jr. (third from left), Director of Clinical Services, accepted the award from the Honorable Governor, Donald L. Carcieri (center, holding award). This achievement demonstrates the commitment NHCNE has to protecting and enhancing the health and well-being of its employees. *U.S. Navy photo by Kathy L. MacKnight*

NMCP Debuts Helical Tomotherapy in Hampton Roads

By Deborah R. Kallgren, Naval Medical Center Portsmouth Public Affairs Office

Naval Medical Center Portsmouth, Va. – Naval Medical Center Portsmouth (NMCP) has become the only military hospital and the only hospital in Hampton Roads to use a new radiation treatment for cancer called helical tomotherapy.

"It's similar to a catscan machine with a cover, and spins 360 degrees around a person," said Lt. Cmdr. Steven Miller, a radiation oncologist at NMCP and an 11-year Navy veteran. "It allows the most accurate treatment of tumors with fewer side effects" compared to traditional radiation treatment.

Miller explained that helical tomotherapy allows a catscan every day using 3D imaging, unlike other treatments. This ensures the radiation is aimed precisely at a tumor and minimizes damage to surrounding tissue.

"It 'scallops out' healthy tissue from radiation exposure, which makes it ideal for tumors near the eye, the brain or other areas where an accurate aim is essential," said Miller.

When NMCP needed new radiation equipment, Miller was a proponent of helical tomotherapy. He had seen it in use at other institutions. Construction to accommodate the unit began last fall, and patients have been treated since January. The cutting-edge equipment is being used extensively.

"Our first patient, a retired Navy Chief, had a brain tumor, and he is now doing very well," said Miller. "Another patient, a woman with lung cancer, previously received traditional radiation treatment. She says the new treatment is better."

Shirley Bender is that patient. She has Stage 3A lung cancer and gushed about her helical tomotherapy treatment. "This is faster, quieter and more accurate. This is 10 thousand times better than the old one. It doesn't make you scared."

Edward Binkowski, a retired Navy Legalman, is being treated for prostate cancer. "I love it and the people who are doing it. They're professional; they make you feel comfortable. I'm not nervous."

More than a dozen computers run the tomotherapy unit, which, even with a military discount cost about \$3.2 million. While NMCP was the first military hospital to acquire helical tomotherapy, the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Md., is planning to install a unit.

University of Virginia Hospital in Charlottesville, Rockingham Memorial Hospital in Harrisonburg and Inova Fairfax Hospital are the only other places where helical tomotherapy is offered in Virginia. Approximately 130 units are in operation in the U.S.

Additional information about the treatment may be found at www.tomotherapy.com.



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KABUL, Afghanistan - Capt. Jim Fisher, Navy Chaplain, opens a Sunrise Easter Service with Army Chaplains Maj. Larry Shaw and Capt. Jerry Johnson April 8. The well-attended service was held for all coalition military members, contractors and civilians at Camp Eggers in Kabul. *U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class David M. Votroubek*